



SUMMARIZED MINUTES

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING CIVIC CENTER SENIOR CENTER 7375 E. SECOND STREET SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA OCTOBER 24, 2005

PRESENT: John Tutelman, Chairman
Michèle TaTiana deLaFreniere, Vice-Chairman
Marty Gendron, Commissioner (arrived at 5:33 p.m.)
Carol Padwe, Commissioner
Enid Seiden, Commissioner

ABSENT: Aubrey Strickstein, Commissioner
Theodore Tyler, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT: Don Logan, Office of Diversity & Dialogue

OTHER: Gerda Weismann Klein, Guest Speaker

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Scottsdale Human Relations Commission was called to order by Chairman Tutelman at 5:18 p.m.

A formal roll call confirmed the members present as stated above.

Chairman Tutelman introduced Gerda Weismann Klein, who was brought to the Commission's attention due to her involvement in helping the victims of Hurricane Katrina. He noted that this is particularly appropriate because of the Commission's efforts to promote diversity in the community and increase tolerance.

2. **REVIEW OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Gendron noted that on the last page of the September 12 minutes he was talking about the instances of institutional racism in New Orleans during the hurricane and its aftermath. He did not mean to refer to Scottsdale. He also noted that they had received scholarships to attend the Diversity Leadership Alliance so there was no payment involved.

COMMISSIONER GENDRON MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 12, 2005 MEETING AS CORRECTED. VICE CHAIRMAN DELAFRENIERE SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF 5 (FIVE) TO 0 (ZERO).

3. **PRESENTATION--GERDA WEISMANN KLEIN:**

Chairman Tutelman noted that the Commission has distributed the booklet Many Voices One Nation, which contains ten ways to promote tolerance.

Ms. Klein said she has written a number of books, the first of which was a high school textbook. She was 15 when the Nazis invaded her town. She was on the death march, which took 3 1/2 months. Of the 4,000 girls who started the march, 120 survived. An award-winning HBO TV movie was made depicting the events.

She and her late husband started the Gerda and Kurt Klein Foundation. She is particularly concerned about hunger, freedom, and racism. Having won an Oscar, she is fortunate to have been in a position to make a difference. Ms. Klein speaks in many school districts. She expressed feeling embarrassed about having a foundation named after her.

Community service is something very dear to her heart. She is upset that it has punitive connotations. It should be uplifted and the value of people's contributions recognized and acknowledged. Although this is unlikely to happen, she urges educators to give grades for community as a requirement of high school students. Young people have enormous energy that has yet to be harnessed. She mentioned local students who had volunteered for Columbine, adding that she knows of incredible stories from around the country.

Ms. Klein noted that many projects can be done without money. She has been working with Judy Schubert of Phoenix on Ryan House. When she addresses schools she is concerned about bullying and violence within schools. She is involved in building a memorial for the children who died in the Columbine massacre. She greatly admires the Southern Poverty Law Center. Morris Dees is a personal friend. He has made a movie about the Lost Boys of Sudan and will make it available for any school free of charge.

She presented a kit she had just received from the Southern Poverty Law Center about her Holocaust experiences and life story. Commissioner Seiden asked if Scottsdale schools were taking advantage of the opportunity to obtain the kits and movie free of charge. Commissioner Padwe asked Ms. Klein how the Foundation raises money. Ms. Klein stated that she has received grants from other foundations and sometimes does appeals, although she tries to keep a low profile in the Valley. Her late husband encouraged her to keep going by saying that the pain she suffered in the Holocaust should not be wasted.

She spoke of her involvement in projects to feed the hungry. A discussion ensued on various Scottsdale efforts to bring holiday meals to people who are homebound and adoption of needy families. The staff at Vista del Camino and the Paiute Neighborhood Center can help make connections. Mr. Logan offered to follow up with more details.

Ms. Klein said her feeling has always been that it is important to elevate people. She did some work with the courts. She felt that many troubled youth never had anyone say thank you to them. She had found that appealing to youth in halfway houses to pledge a little money each week to help feed children had an effect on many of the youth.

Ms. Klein described how she had spoken with troubled youth recently about her background and making choices, noting that this approach is effective with many of the troubled youth. Many of them can be helped. She added that she has been privileged to meet a lot of people who have dedicated their lives to doing good things. Today one of the problems is that there are no role models for kids. In answer to a question from Commissioner Padwe, Mr. Logan said that young people are motivated by different things depending on their individual values.

Commissioner Padwe remarked that the women in the State Prison raised approximately \$15,000 for the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation Race for the Cure.

Ms. Klein said that people have to be given some inspiration. She recently gave 2,000 letters from children to ASU. Her story stressed the normal teenage life she led before the Holocaust, which young people can identify with. She was fortunate that an uncle in Turkey had family photos, because most Holocaust survivors do not. Showing the horrors of the concentration camps disturbs people and may not convey the message. The romance of marrying one of her American liberators in Paris added to the power of the story. Ms. Klein said that in the past she was embarrassed by her life story but now is not so embarrassed. The story might help someone else.

Commissioner Seiden asked if they could make sure that the Scottsdale high schools get copies. Ms. Klein distributed contact information, noting that anyone

can request the kit free of charge. Commissioner Gendron committed to pass the information on to his student teachers.

Mr. Logan stated that if the Commission is agreeable, he would be happy to share the information from tonight's presentation with the Scottsdale schools. After a short discussion, Marla Abramowitz was identified as the person to whom the information should be directed.

In response to a question from Commissioner Padwe, Ms. Klein said her work is not intended just for the Jewish community. She is very involved in Ryan House, a new project started by Judy Schubert, modeled after Helen House in Great Britain. Saint Joseph's Hospital gave the ground for the building, which will be a place where children with severe medical problems can go for respite care. The Phoenix project is the first in the country and will be a prototype.

Chairman Tutelman said the presentation has given the Commission food for thought and ideas for future actions. Commissioner Padwe suggested bringing it up at the regional meeting so the other Human Relations Commissions can share the information. Ms. Klein presented a copy of her first book and a DVD with interviews and television appearances to the Commission. She said that although she is reluctant to make a lot of appearances or commit to events that are far into the future, if the Commission ever needs someone to speak on short notice due to an emergency, she would be glad to help out if possible.

Commissioner Seiden warmly recommended the HBO movie. Chairman Tutelman thanked Ms. Klein for her presentation, especially since she was exhausted from travel. Ms. Klein said that one is always guilty of the shoemaker's shoes. She does outreach all over the country and not in her own community. She told the Commission that the Foundation website, www.kleinfoundation.org has extensive information and thanked them for the work they are doing.

Chairman Tutelman remarked that the Commission is grateful for her work and thanked her for coming. Ms. Klein offered to return if there are particular issues that the Commission would like to discuss.

4. PROMOTING UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY

Mr. Logan distributed copies of the most recent edition of the Promoting Unity in the Community brochure, which was printed last week. Staff are in the process of mailing these out. The Office of Diversity and Dialogue will monitor applications and place them on future agendas.

5. **REGIONAL HRC DAY LABORER SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATE:**

Commissioner Gendron reported that there had been a meeting on October 16th attended by only two people. He did not attend. He attended the Arizona Immigration Forum last week. The Chandler representative was there and they discussed the fact that this activity will not be completed by November. It has been proposed that the follow-up forum be moved to January or February of 2006. Local politicians' offices have been contacted. A number of speakers who would be available have been identified. The intention is to limit the forum to the Day Labor issue. The next planning meeting is to be in Mesa. He will e-mail staff with details as they become available.

Commissioner Gendron also noted that the Immigration Forum did not discuss day labor in any positive sense. The forum focused strictly on immigration and the three primary bills that are currently floating under consideration. Their authors, McCain, Kyl and Hayworth, sent televised presentations but did not attend the forum in person.

Mr. Logan commented that although there has been some discussion that day labor is not a Scottsdale problem, home improvement centers typically attract those types of activity and this can potentially become a Scottsdale issue. It would be shallow to take the view that it is not happening in our backyard.

Vice-Chairman deLaFreniere reported that in her neighborhood they had a contractor living in a rental house with day laborers on the street every day. Commissioner Gendron noted there have been reports of day labor activities at the Home Depot at 90th Street and Via Linda. When the Lowe's store opens on McDowell in the old K-Mart site the problem may become more obvious as it is on a bus route.

6. **HISPANIC HERITAGE CELEBRATION**

Chairman Tutelman said the Hispanic Heritage Community Celebration was a fantastic event, thanks in no small part to the Office of Diversity and Dialogue and the Diversity Advisory Committee. People enjoyed great entertainment and good food. The event was well attended. Commissioner Gendron commended the Diversity Advisory Committee and the community. He was encouraged to see the whole community coming together for this celebration. The Diversity and Dialogue Office has made the transition to achieve this. He recommended a commendation for the Diversity Advisory Committee for their hard work.

Commissioner Seiden enjoyed seeing the teenagers at the event from the service organizations.

Chairman Tutelman noted that in each of the three years this event has been held there have been improvements, which began as a City employee event and now attracts thousands of people.

Mr. Logan undertook to forward compliments to the Diversity Advisory Committee, noting that a debriefing meeting is scheduled for later this week and more time and effort is expended on the event than is generally realized, including the 14-hour day on the actual event. The service industry students made a significant difference.

COMMISSIONER GENDRON MADE A MOTION THAT THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION COMMENDS AND CONGRATULATES THE DIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND COMMUNITY FOR THE SPECTACULAR EVENT THAT THEY WERE SO INSTRUMENTAL IN PROVIDING TO THE SCOTTSDALE COMMUNITY, WITH THANKS TO THE OFFICE OF DIVERSITY AND DIALOGUE FOR THEIR LEADERSHIP.

Mr. Logan undertook to prepare a letter under the Chair's signature to the Chair of the Hispanic Heritage Community Celebration Committee.

COMMISSIONER PADWE SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF 5 (FIVE) TO 0 (ZERO).

7. **CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATION SERIES**

Mr. Logan informed the Commission that they are into the second series of four workshops, the first of which was: "Muslims in Scottsdale: Their Culture and Faith". There was some resistance from the community. The presentation was very well received, nonetheless, by the attendees.

The upcoming session is: "Lessons From The Holocaust". Helen Handler, a Holocaust survivor who lives in the valley, will present on November 8 from noon to 1:00 p.m., and on November 15 in the evening. Staff are expecting a wonderful response. Members of the public have started responding. The optimum attendance is 20-30 people.

Commissioner Gendron reported attending the Thursday session of the first workshop. Mr. Logan noted that the evaluations from both sessions revealed that most participants were pleased with the opportunity to have a dialogue.

General discussion ensued regarding the two workshops.

Commissioner Seiden noted that the mosque construction appears to be finished, but she does not see much activity there. Nothing more has been heard in response to the Commission's offer to assist the mosque in holding an open house

or outreach to the community. She felt that an open house might help community relations. Mr. Logan said that dialogue is crucial to get to know diverse groups and that without it, stereotyping results. He is facilitating a Scottsdale Leadership Day on Friday entitled: The Diversity Around Us. Dr. Nadir has been invited to speak on the Muslim faith and the stereotypes that go with it.

8. **CHAIRMAN REPORTS:**

Chairman Tutelman advised the Commission that since Dr. McMillan is no longer the staff liaison, he is going to draft a letter thanking her for her extraordinary and exemplary service. Commissioners agreed that the letter should be written on behalf of the entire Commission. Commissioner Gendron requested that a copy of the letter be addressed also to Dr. McMillan's supervisor.

9. **COMMISSIONER ITEMS:**

Vice-Chairman deLaFreniere attended the Rainbow Festival in Phoenix. The event was quite successful. She was encouraged by the high proportion of young attendees. Chairman Tutelman noted that Time had a cover story about young gays coming out. Vice-Chairman deLaFreniere said that the Tucson organization Wing Span is hoping to open a facility in the Valley. Young people are increasingly open and accepting of themselves and prepared to come out. There are currently no services specifically for minors dealing with gender issues.

Commissioner Gendron encouraged everyone to look at www.linkaz.org to learn about the Arizona Immigration Forum, noting that Proposition 200 plays a large part in the Forum's current and planned activities. Although he does not necessarily vouch for the rigor of all the surveys, the site at least provides some developed statistics on public opinion.

Commissioner Gendron noted that he will attend the Attorney General's presentation on November 4 and 5, where speakers are coming from across the country to talk about immigration issues. The venue is the Scottsdale Conference Center.

Commissioner Gendron also attended the afternoon session of the DLA conference. Mr. Logan attended the morning session and a workshop and found it worthwhile.

Commissioner Padwe asked about plans for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day regional event. Mr. Logan reported that he has been working with the East Valley Unity Walk organizers. The Black Heritage Celebration event that was held in Tempe has been moved to Indian Steele Park in Phoenix. The organizers of the event want to move the walk to Phoenix but were unable to obtain a response from City of Phoenix staff. After a meeting with Councilman Johnson, who has participated in the walk in the past, they are now working with the Phoenix

Human Relations Commission. The event is planned for February 4, 2006. He will share more details as they become available. APS is funding the festival.

10. **OPEN CALL TO THE PUBLIC:**

None.

11. **STAFF LIASON ITEMS:**

Mr. Logan noted that Dr. McMillan has been appointed interim director of the Learning and Organizational Development Division within Human Resources. This is certainly a well-deserved opportunity for her. It is a very challenging role and everyone wishes her the best.

Mr. Logan encouraged Commission members to attend the Cross-Cultural events, noting that the Human Relations Commission presence is critical to the citizens who attend. Staff will acknowledge the Commissioners' presence so that members of the public know that they are there.

12. **ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
AV-Tronics, Inc.